

# RAB AND RINGAN:

A TALE.

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AS DELIVERED IN THE PANTHEON  
EDINBURGH.

*(Recited in the Character of a Poor Pellar)*

BY THE  
AUTHOR OF WATTY AND MEG.

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To which is added,  
THE TWA CATS AND THE CHEESE:

A TALE.

DEMONSTRATING  
THE GREAT FOLLY OF GOING TO LAW.

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[The following Tale was recited by the Author, at the Pantheon, in a Debate on the Question, "Whether is Diffidence, or the Allurements of Pleasure, the greatest BAR to Progress in Knowledge."

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## RAB AND RINGAN:

### A TALE.

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#### INTRODUCTION.

**H**ECH! but its awfu' like to rise up here,  
Whar sic a sight o' learnt fouks' pows appear!  
Sae mony piercing een a' fixt on ane,  
Is mairt enough to freeze me to a flane!  
But its ae mercy, mony thanks to fate,  
Pedlars are poor, but unco seldom late.

*(Speaking to the President.)*

This question, Sir, has been right weel disputet,  
And meikle, weel-a-wat's been said about it:  
Chiefs, that precisely to the point can speak,  
And gallop o'er lang blaunds of kittle Greek,  
Hae sent trae lika side their sharp opinion,  
And peel'd it up as ane wad peel an ingon.

[The question had been spoken to on both sides before this Tale was recited, which was the last opinion given on the debate.]

I winna plague ye lang wi' my poor spale,  
 But only crave your patience to a *Tale*;  
 By which ye'll ken on whatna side I'm stinnin',  
 As I perceive your *binmost minute's* rinnin'.

### THE TALE.

There liv'd in Fife, an auld, stout, worldly chiel,  
 Wha's stomach kend nae fare but *milk* and *meal*;  
 A wife he had, I think they ca'd her BELL,  
 And twa big sons, amais't as heigh's himsel'.  
 RAB, was a gleg, smart cock, wi' pouthert pass,  
 RINGAN, a slow, feart, bashfa', simple bash.

Baith to the College gaed. At first, spruce RAB,  
 At Greek and Latin, grew a very dab;  
 He beat a' roun' about him, fair and clean,  
 And ilk ane courted him to be their frien';  
 Frae house to house they harl'd him to dinner,  
 But curs't poor RINGAN for a *bum-drum* sinner.

RAB tauked now in sic a lofty strain,  
 As tho' braid Scotland had been a' his ain,  
 He ca'd the *Kirk* the *Church*, the *Tirth* the *Globe*,  
 And chang'd his name forsooth, frae *Rab* to *BOB*.  
 Where'er ye met him, flourishing his rung,  
 The hale discourse was murder'd wi' his tongue.  
 On friends and faes wi' impudence he set,  
 And ramm'd his nose in ev'ry thing he met.

The College now, to RAB grew dous and dull,  
 He scorn'd wi' books to stupify his skull;  
 But whirl'd to *Plays* and *Balls*, and sic like places,  
 And roar'd awa at *Fairs* and *Kintra Races*:

Sent hame for filler frae his mither **BELL**,  
 And cast a horse, and rade a race himsel';  
 Drank night and day, and syne when mortal fu',  
 Row'd on the floor, and snor'd like ony sow;  
 Lost a' his filler wi' some gambling sparks,  
 And pawn'd for punch, his Bible and his farks;  
 Till, driven at last to own he had enough,  
*Gaed hame a' rags, to baid his Father's pleagb.*

Poor *lum-drum* **RINGAN**, play'd anither part,  
 For **RINGAN** wanted neither wit nor art:  
 Of mony a far-aff place he kend the gate;  
 Was deep, deep learn'd, but unco, unco *blate*.  
 He kend how mony mile 'twas to the moon,  
 How mony *rake* wad lave the ocean toom;  
 Whare a' the swallows gaed in time o' snaw;  
 What gars the thunder roar, and tempest blaw;  
 Whare lumps o' filler grow aneath the grun;  
 How a' this yirth rows round about the sun;  
 In short, on *books* fae meikle time he spent,  
 Ye cou'dna' speak o' ought, but **RINGAN** kent.

Sae meikle *learning*, with fae little *pride*,  
 Soon gain'd the love o' a' the kintra side,  
 And *Death*, at that time, happ'ning to nip aff  
 'The *Parish Minister*—a poor dull *ca'f*.  
**RINGAN** was sought—he cou'dna' say them nay,  
 And there he's preaching at this very day.

### MORAL.

Now, Mr. **PRESIDENT**, I think it's plain,  
 'That youthfu' *diffidence* is certain gain.  
 Instead of blocking up the road to knowledge,  
 It guides alike, in *Commerce* or at *College*;

Struggles, the bursts of passion to controul,  
 Feeds all the finer feelings of the soul ;  
 Defies the deep-laid stratagems of guile,  
 And gives *even innocence a sweeter smile* ;  
 Ennobles all the little worth we have,  
 And shields our virtue even to the grave.

How vast the difference then, between the twain !  
 Since *Pleasure* ever is pursu'd by *Pain*.  
*Pleasure's* a *Syren*, with inviting arms,  
 Sweet is her voice, and pow'rful are her charms ;  
 Lur'd by her call, we tread her flow'ry ground,  
*Joy* wings our steps, and *Musick* warbles round ;  
 Lull'd in her arms, we lose the flying hours,  
 And lie embosom'd midst her blooming bow'rs,  
 Till—arm'd with *death*, she watches our undoing,  
*Stabs* while she *sings*, and *triumphs* in our ruin.

END OF RAB AND RINGAN.

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THE  
TWA CATS *and the* CHEESE;  
A TALE.

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" *Laxx is a draw-well unco deep,*  
" *Without a rim, fouk out to keep,*  
" *Whan drunk—a donnart chiel may dreep*  
    " *Fu sleely in,*  
" *But finds the gate baith flay and steep,*  
    " *Ere out be win."*

FERGUSON.

TWA Cats anes on a cheefe did light,  
To which baith had an equal right;  
But disputes, such as aft arise,  
Fell out, in sharing of the prize.

Fair play, said ane, ye bite o'er thick,  
Thae teeth of your's gang wond'rous quick;  
*Let's part it, else, lang or the moon*  
Be chang'd—the keback will be done;

But wha's to do't?—They're parties baith,  
And ane may do the ither skaith.

With joint consent, awa they trudge,  
And laid the cheese before a Judge :  
A Monkey, wi' a *canst* face,  
Clerk to a Justice o' the Peace ;  
Whan he his master's chair had fill'd,  
A Judge he seem'd, in justice skill'd ;  
And umpire chosen for division,  
Baith fware to stand by his decision.

Demure he looks—the cheese he pales—  
Prees—fin's it gude—ca's for the scales ,  
His knife whops throw't—in twa it fell ;  
Syne puts each ha'f in either shell :  
Solemnly says—“ We'll weigh the case ,  
“ And sincerest justice shall have place.”

Then, lifting up the scales, he fand  
The tane bang up the tither stand :  
Syne out he took the heaviest ha'f,  
And ate a knockt o't quickly aff,  
And try'd it syne,—it now prov'd light,  
“ *Er end Cats,*” said he, “ *we'll do you right.*”

Then to the ither ha'f he fell,  
And laid till't toughly tooth and nail,  
Till, weigh'd again, it lightest prov'd.  
The Judge, wha this sweet process lov'd,  
Stil weigh'd the case, and still ate on,  
Till clients baith, were weary grown :  
And tenting how the matter went,  
Cried, “ *Come, come, Sir, we're baith content*”



“ Ye fools,” quoth he, “ but justice too  
 “ *Maun be content, as well as you.*”

Thus grumbled they, thus he went on,  
 Till *baith the halves* were near han’ done.  
*Poor Poufses* now the daffin’ saw,  
 Of gawn for *nigynes* to the law ;  
 And begg’d the Judge, that he wad please  
 To give them the remaining cheese :  
 To this his Worship grave reply’d,  
 “ *The dues of Court maun first be paid,*  
 “ And justice pleas’d :—What’s to the fore  
 “ Will scrimply do to clear your score.  
 “ That’s our decret—Gae hame and sleep,  
 “ *And thank us ye’ve win aff sue cheap.*”

#### MORAL.

“ Then, tho’ at odds wi’ a’ the warl’,  
 “ Amang ourfels we’ll never quarrel,  
 “ Tho’ discord gie a cankar’d snarl  
     “ To spoil our glee,  
 “ As lang’s there’s *pith* into the barrel,  
     “ We’ll *drink* and gree.”

F I N I S.



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gree."